

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1274

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FOR EAGLEBURGER FROM SEELYE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, US

SUBJECT: REPORT OF INSPECTION ARMORED LIMOUSINE

1. RSO ROBERT O'BRIEN HAS GIVEN ME HIS REPORT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH LED TO HIS INSPECTION ON JULY 15 OF THE ARMORED LIMOUSINE IN WHICH AMBASSADOR MELOY AND ROBERT WARING WERE RIDING WHEN THEY WERE KIDNAPPED. THE REPORT INCLUDES A REPORT OF BOB'S EXAMINATION OF THE CAR. I AM SENDING IT TO YOU FOR SUCH DISTRIBUTION AS YOU FEEL MAY BE DESIRABLE AND HOPE YOU WILL SHARE A COPY WITH VIC DIKEOS IN SY.

2. QUOTE AT MY REQUEST AN APPOINTMENT WAS MADE WITH ABU JAAFAR OF THE PLO TO DISCUSS THE SECURITY ESCORT ARRANGEMENTS FOR AN INCOMING CONVOY FROM DAMASCUS. MY NOTE CROSSED WITH ONE FROM ABU JAAFAR WHICH REQUESTED AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE SAME TIME AND RESULTED IN SOME INITIAL CONFUSION AS TO THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING.

JAAFAR EXPLAINED THAT THE PURPOSE OF HIS NOTE WAS FOR ME TO MEET WITH ABU IYAD, THE PLO OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION OF THE KIDNAPPING AND MURDER OF AMBASSADOR MELOY, MR. WARING AND ZOHAI. I WAS TO GO WITH IYAD TO INSPECT THE VEHICLE. HOWEVER, DUE TO THE DEATH OF IYAD'S FATHER IN CAIRO HE WOULD NOT BE PRESENT. AS A RESULT, I WAS LED TO BELIEVE, INCORRECTLY AS IT TURNED OUT, THAT THE INSPECTION OF THE VEHICLE WOULD BE DELAYED.

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WE THEN DISCUSSED SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETING THE INCOMING CONVOY AND PER INSTRUCTIONS FROM A/DCM HUNT A SECOND MEETING WAS AGREED TO FOR THE FOLLOWING DAY TO DISCUSS THE SCHEDULED EVACUATION ON TUESDAY, JULY 20.

AT THIS POINT, WE WERE JOINED BY A THIRD INDIVIDUAL WHO WAS INTRODUCED TO ME ONLY AS "ONE OF ABU IYAD'S MEN" AND JAAFAR STATED THAT HE WOULD TAKE ME TO SEE AMBASSADOR MELOY'S VEHICLE.

I WAS DRIVEN BY FATAH MAJOR AHMED, AND WE FOLLOWED A SECOND VEHICLE DRIVEN BY IYAD'S MAN. THE DRIVE TOOK APPROXIMATELY TEN MINUTES THROUGH THE SABRA AREA TO A LOCATION WHICH I BELIEVE TO BE THE INTERSECTION OF EL KARTOUN AND RUE ABOU JAHL, NEAR THE CIRCLE SPORTIF. THE CAR WAS LOCATED IN A SMALL VACANT LOT AND COVERED BY A TARPAULIN WHICH WAS REMOVED BY MY GUIDE.

THE EXTERIOR OF THE VEHICLE SHOWED NO EVIDENCE OF EXTERIOR DAMAGE EXCEPT FOR A BENT REAR BUMPER. MY GUIDE EXPLAINED THAT THE INDIVIDUALS FROM WHOM FATAH HAD OBTAINED THE VEHICLE HAD PARKED IT IN AN APARTMENT GARAGE IN A VERY NARROW CONFINED SPACE. MY GUIDE FURTHER EXPLAINED THAT THE VEHICLE WAS REMOVED BY FATAH IN GREAT HASTE AND HE USED THE EXPRESSION "BY FORCE." A CRANE OR TOW TRUCK WAS USED TO PULL THE CAR OUT OF THE PARKING SPACE BY THE REAR BUMPER. THIS EXPLANATION APPEARS TO BE PLAUSIBLE AS THE MARKS ON THE BUMPER ARE CONSISTENT WITH SUCH AN EXERCISE. THE VEHICLE WAS THEN TOWED BY THE FRONT TO ITS PRESENT LOCATION. THE MANNER OF ITS REMOVAL AND THE WAY IN WHICH IT WAS TOWED CAUSED DAMAGE TO THE TRANSMISSION AND REAR END. AS A RESULT THE CAR CANNOT BE DRIVEN. MY GUIDE STATED THAT THE ENGINE STILL FUNCTIONS, BUT THIS WAS NOT DEMONSTRATED FOR ME. THE TRUNK LOCK HAS BEEN PUNCHED OUT BY FATAH TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE INTERIOR OF THE VEHICLE BECAUSE, AS MY GUIDE EXPLAINED, THEY (FATAH) DID NOT GET THE KEYS WITH THE CAR.

AT THE TIME OF MY INSPECTION, ACCESS TO THE INTERIOR OF THE CAR WAS OBTAINED BY SLIDING A WIRE BETWEEN THE DOOR TO PULL THE DOOR LOCK BUTTON UP. THE DOORS, DOOR LOCKS AND HANDLES SHOWED NO EVIDENCE OF FORCED ENTRY. AFTER A THOROUGH

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EXAMINATION OF THE EXTERIOR, I COULD FIND NO EVIDENCE OF FURTHER DAMAGE. THE RADIO WAS STILL IN THE VEHICLE, HOWEVER, IT WAS PARTIALLY DISASSEMBLED. THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT THE RADIO HAD BEEN DAMAGED, BUT IT APPEARED THAT SOMEONE HAD ATTEMPTED TO REMOVE IT FROM THE VEHICLE. THE RADIO ANTENNA WAS NOT IN PLACE, HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE THAT IT WAS CUT OFF BUT RATHER THAT IT WAS REMOVED INTACT. U FOUND THIS EXTERIOR ANTENNA ON THE FLOOR OF THE VEHICLE AND THERE WAS NO

INDICATION THAT IT HAD BEEN DAMAGED. I QUESTIONED MY GUIDE CONCERNING THE RADIO'S CONDITION, AND HE STATED THAT FATAH HAD NOT TOUCHED THE INTERIOR OF THE VEHICLE AND THAT IT WAS IN THE SAME CONDITION AS WHEN IT CAME INTO THEIR POSSESSION.

I CAREFULLY LOOKED FOR ANY EVIDENCE OF BLOOD, BULLET HOLES, RIPS OR TEARS AND COULD FIND NO INDICATION THAT ANY VIOLENCE TOOK PLACE WITHIN THE VEHICLE. ALL DOOR AND WINDOW ARMOR WAS INTACT AND THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY ATTEMPT TO INSPECT OR REMOVE IT.

AFTER SPENDING APPROXIMATELY 45 MINUTES INSPECTING THE VEHICLE, I COULD FIND NO EVIDENCE OF EXTERIOR, INTERIOR, RADIO OR MECHANICAL DAMAGE THAT MIGHT HAVE OCCURRED DURING THE KIDNAPPING AND SUBSEQUENT MURDERS.

WHEN THE INSPECTION WAS COMPLETED I WAS DRIVEN TO THE EMBASSY BY MAJOR AHMED AND DURING THE RIDE HE DISCUSSED THE PLO'S THEORY OF A CONSPIRACY. HE REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE QUESTION OF HOW THE ASSAILANTS KNEW AMBASSADOR MELOY'S SCHEDULE AND ROUTE. THE MAJOR AGAIN MADE A PLEA FOR COOPERATION IN THE INVESTIGATION AND STATED THAT WE MIGHT WANT TO USE THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT. I BELIEVE HIS REASON FOR MAKING THIS SUGGESTION WAS TO OFFER A METHOD OF COOPERATION WITHOUT DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE PLO. UNQUOTE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ASSASSINATION, NO TEXT, SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS, AUTOMOBILES, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT06507
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: FOR EAGLEBURGER
Executive Order: OA
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P850108-2441
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760734/aaaabdgl.tel
Line Count: 142
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <20 OCT 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORT OF INSPECTION ARMORED LIMOUSINE
TAGS: PFOR, PREL, LE, US, EG, PLO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006